

THE SURVIVAL
OF THE FITTEST

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE THREE HILLS
STEPS TO PARNASSUS
IMAGINARY SPEECHES

THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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TO W.

IN THE TRENCHES

You live with Death: yet over there
You breathe a somewhat cleaner air.

NOTE

The “Christmas Hymn” appeared in *The New Statesman*, and some of the other verses in *The Herald*. “The Entente” is reprinted by special permission of the proprietors of *Punch*.

CONTENTS

	Page
The Survival of the Fittest	9
Christmas Hymn for Lambeth	14
Arms and the Politician; or, The Pilgrims' Progress	21
Ballade, Written in a Moment of Elation	29
Homœopathy	33
Bridging the Gulf; or, The Union of Classes	39
The Touch of Nature	48
The Higher Life for Clergymen	52
 Epigrams:	
I. The Dilemma	57
II. Lord Molasses	58
III. The Entente	60
IV. On Base Metals	61
V. The Trinity	62
VI. Inexperto Crede	63
VII. A Tribute to the Memory of Richard Porson	64

The Survival of the Fittest

(In Memoriam, L. C. and T.)

"Those like Mr. Strachey, of *The Spectator*, who say that without war the race would degenerate."—*Star*, March 30, 1915.

THESE were my friends ;
Strachey, you did not know
them,
For they were simple, unaspiring
men ;
No ordinary wind of chance could
blow them
Within the range of your austerer
ken.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

They were most uninformed. They
never even

—So ignorant and godless was their
youth—

Heard you expound, with reverences
to Heaven,

The elements of biologic truth.

Had they but had the privilege to
cluster

Around Gamaliel's feet, they would
have known

That hate and massacre also have
their lustre,

And that man cannot live by Love
alone.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

But having no pillar of flame of your
igniting

To guide by night, no pillar of
cloud by day,

They thought War was an evil thing,
and fighting

Filthy at best. So, thus deluded,
they

Not seeing the war as a wise elimi-
nation

Or a cleansing purge, or a whole-
some exercise,

Went out with mingled loathing and
elation

Only because there towered before
their eyes

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

England, an immemorial crusader,
A great dream-statue, seated and
serene,
Who had seen much blood, and sons
who had betrayed her,
But still shone out with hands and
garments clean ;

Summoning now with an imperious
message
To one last fight that Europe
should be free,
Whom, though it meant a swift and
bitter passage,
They had to serve, for she served
Liberty.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Romance and rhetoric! Yet with
such nonsense nourished,
They faced the guns and the dead
and the rats and the rains,
And all in a month, as summer
waned, they perished;
And they had clear eyes, strong
bodies, and some brains.

.

Strachey, these died. What need is
there to mention

Anything more? What argument
could give

A more conclusive proof of your
contention?

Strachey, these died, and men like
you still live.

Christmas Hymn for Lambeth

"Patriotism for Pauper Children.—The Lambeth Guardians yesterday decided that, in order that the Poor Law school children may have an opportunity of appreciating the position of national affairs, the usual practice of allowing each child an egg for breakfast on Christmas morning be suspended this year. The Chairman of the Board remarked that it was better to let the children go without eggs than to give them shop eggs."—*The Times*, November 12, 1914.

"Lambeth is the site of the historic archiepiscopal palace."—*Guide to London*.

"We are the Boys of the Bulldog Breed."—*Nos Omnes*.

CHRISTMAS HYMN

HARK! the Lambeth Guardians
sing:

Glory to the new-born King;

Glory to the gun and sword

That will teach the German horde

In a way they'll not forget,

England still is England yet.

We are also sons of Drake

Who would strike for England's

sake;

We shall help to win the day

In our more prosaic way.

None, we know, would dare suggest

That we have not done our best

CHRISTMAS HYMN

In the past to educate
Babes who sponge upon the State,
To promote their civic sense
And save the ratepayers expense.
Should this education cease
With the piping times of peace?
No; and we know how to teach
them
In a way we hope will reach them.

Eggs have been upon occasion
Instruments of moral suasion.
We have brought from Scandinavia
For the birthday of the Saviour,
Eggs which taught our infant folk
To detest the foreign yolk;

FOR LAMBETH

Eggs which would, we felt, remind
them

They must take things as they find
them,

And that little pauper hearts
Are not even good in parts.

This régime, we think, suffices
For the children's normal vices;
But the want of public spirit—
What return does this not merit?
Loudly we in concert call
They should have no eggs at all;
Dock their food, and when they're
starvin'
They'll perhaps attend to Garvin.

CHRISTMAS HYMN

Eggs is eggs, and eggs is dear,
They shall have no eggs this year!

• • • • •

Guardians mine, so far so good
This adjustment in the food;
But, my Guardians, why, I beg,
Go no further than an egg?
If you'd have them not ignore
All the grave effects of war,
Sell their beds and let them freeze
Like the Belgian refugees;
Go the whole instructive hog,
Shell the workhouse, burn and flog.

Flog a few and shoot a few—
You will surely, if you do,

FOR LAMBETH

Rouse them from their lethargy.
Though the weaker ones may cry
For dead fathers and dead mothers
They will realize that others'
Situation is much worse,
And agree that war's a curse,
And imbibe a novel zeal
For their native commonweal.

Thus when they with clearer eyes
Are persuaded to despise
Luxury, and cease to treasure
A vain and empty life of pleasure,
Duly chastened they will sing:
"Glory to the new-born King!
I am sorry, Jesus dear,
I don't deserve an egg this year;

CHRISTMAS HYMN

Peace on earth and mercy mild,
And Christ forgive a workhouse child."

Then, my Guardians, you will go
Home to Alexandra Row,
Chatsworth Terrace or "St. Ann's,"
"River View," "The Den," "The
Manse,"

Justly proud of what you've done
To repel the hated Hun,
Hoping that it will afford
Satisfaction to the Board;
And round your Christmas table heavy
With things (thank God, we've got
a Navy !)

You will talk about the War
And eat and eat until you snore.

Arms and the Politician; or, The Pilgrims' Progress

Sub-Lieut. Sir L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P.
to be Lieut., R.N.V.R.; Major (tempy.) Sir
F. E. Smith, M.P., to be Lieut.-Col. (tempy.).
—Daily Press.

OUR ears had grown familiar
with
“Mr. Money” and “Mr. Smith,”
When, in the war’s first anxious
hour,
Bellona, thy transmuting power,
That we might stem and bring to a
halt
The onset of the Teuton foeman,

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

Turned this into a breezy salt,
And that into a bronzed yeoman.

Smith, "Captain Smith" we then did
dub,
Chiozza was a naval sub;
Smith at the Press Bureau cut
capers,
Leo wrote letters to the papers;
And Smith, who had a mild renown
As an old military stager
("Galloper" Smith of Portadown),
Was very soon promoted Major.

Although he'd shaved and bought
his kit,
Chiozza had to wait a bit,

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

Finding his sea-legs in Whitehall;
Meanwhile, that he might have some
small

But reassuring proof that they
Looked on him in a friendly light,
The Government, on New Year's
Day,
Created him a New Year's knight.

A knighthood's something, for a
start—

Chiozza took it in good part;
He now was Warden of the Air,
And did his duties nobly there;
Yet still found ample time to address
The House about our celibate
shirkers,

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

And urge that Carson should suppress

The organs of seditious workers.

For Carson now was head of the law
(A man all traitors hold in awe),
And, grateful still for days not distant,

Had brought in Smith as his assistant;

Yes, Major Smith, the battle-scarred
(Why not a khaki wig and gown?),
Now kept, conjointly, watch and ward
O'er the Law Office of the Crown.

O Bench! O battle! and O breeze!
O duplicate job and double fees!

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

O Major Smith! O Smith, K.C.!
Right Honourable Sir F. E.!
This *was* a handful, to be sure;
Yet brave Sir L. did not look
nervous;
He knew that he would yet secure
Like honours for the senior ser-
vice.

The last achievements of the pair
Are still too recent an affair
For me to feel obliged to speak
Of what occurred the other week,
When the pale Kaiser gasped “Wow-
wow!”

On seeing in his morning journal

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

That Leo was lieutenant now
And Smith was now lieutenant-
colonel.

'Tis plain the next reward must be
Of Smith's vast versatility
A major-generalship or two;
O grim and complex thing to view!
Like Giant Two-Heads in the fable,
Or Briareus of classic myth,
The gallant and Right Honourable
Solicitor-Major-General Smith!

Well, if this most selective war
Goes on for two or three years more,
There surely can be little doubt
Some day when the *Gazette* comes out

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

In the promotions we shall see,
And nobody will think it funny,
Field-Marshal Viscount Smith, K.G.,
And Admiral of the Fleet Lord
Money.

Brothers, I shrink from dizzier flights—
Yet, as I lie awake at nights,
I sometimes nurse the hope sublime
That we shall live to see the time
When, gratefully (who knows? who
knows?)

Obsequious mankind allots a
Half hemisphere to kiss the toes
Of Emperor Smith and King
Chiozza.

ARMS AND THE POLITICIAN

ENVOI.

'Tis not for every one, I own,
To rise from Wadham to a throne;
Besides much energy and pluck
That needs no ordinary luck.
And he, perhaps, will be pronounced
Still luckier, and still adept,
Who, with superb resilience, bounced
From cheap statistics to a sceptre.

But still the prospect's bright enough
For strenuous men in silk and stuff;
And Glory, good my brother scribe,
No more eludes our inky tribe;
And though, for average humdrum men,
A crown is a beyond-belief bag,
An admiral's pennant's on each pen,
A marshal's baton in each brief-bag.

Ballade

Written in a Moment of Elation

On seeing that the foregoing poem had been answered by Sir Leo Money in *Verse*, in *Quite Fluent Stanzas*—stanzas which were, however, as disingenuous in their reasoning as they were (I admit) disarming in their amiability.

I DID not jest, I did not write
for fun,

It was my view that though he
did present

A less impressive target than the
Hun

He ought not to escape admonish-
ment.

BALLADE

And, as he had no case for argument,

I thought at most he'd breathe (in prose) a curse.

I had misjudged this cheerful Southern gent—

I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

He rhymed alone. No lyric web was spun

By that great expert in emolument;

The warrior Smith stood songless by his gun.

But I shall not profess astonishment

BALLADE

Apollo through Sir Frederick found
no vent,
For poetry puts nothing in the
purse.
Still, 1 in 2's two score and ten per
cent—
I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

Time flies apace; my days will soon
be done;
My quickening conscience bids me
to repent
Of sins of both sorts, many and many
a one;
For, briefly, this is my predicament:

BALLADE

When I consider how my time was
spent

I feel I could not well have spent
it worse,

There is but one redeeming incident:

I drew Chiozza Money into verse.

ENVOI.

Prince, even I may have my monu-
ment.

When I am underneath my sable
herse,

Carve but these words, and I shall
lie content:

“I drew Chiozza Money into verse.”

Homœopathy

"A great outburst of popular indignation."—
Press, Passim, after the anti-German riots.

"Trouncing the Teuton."—*Evening News, Headline.*

"We are heartily glad that the Russians burned Memel, and we hope that the Allies will burn a good many more German towns before this war is over."—*Morning Post, Leading Article.*

WE was in the "Blue Dragon,"
 Sid 'Awkins and me,
When all of a sudden, "Here,
 Ernie," says he,
"There are limits to what flesh and
 blood can endure;
We must really protest against Prus-
 sian Kultur.

HOMŒOPATHY

"There's an alien butcher down
Wapping High Street,
The swine's gone and asked me to
pay for my meat;
His father's a Frenchman, his mother's
a Moor,
But he'd do with a lesson in Prussian
Kultur."

So we off like a streak, and we pulled
him from bed,
And tore off his nightshirt and pum-
melled his head,
And rolled him along in the mud to
secure
He should quite grasp the meaning
of Prussian Kultur.

HOMŒOPATHY

O the way that we bashed 'im and
hooted and hissed
Was a sight Lady Bathurst ought
not to have missed;
For her organ *Die Post* gives a steady
and sure
Support to the tenets of Prussian
Kultur.

—
Then we emptied the shop in a white
moral heat,
I got half a bullock, my wife some
pigs' feet,
And some very nice tripe which she
thought ought to cure
The Kaiser's devotion to Prussian
Kultur.

HOMŒOPATHY

Yes, even the coppers themselves
took a part
With a cutlet apiece from Sid
'Awkins's cart,
As a positive proof that they shared
in our feeling,
And did not confuse moral protest
with stealing.

Reassured by these kindly, encourag-
ing cops,
We protested at each of the neigh-
bouring shops,
Till at last at the end of our punitive
week
They took us, *pro forma*, in front of
the beak.

HOMŒOPATHY

But he only remarked that no civilized
nation
Could hope to withstand such extreme
provocation.

“ You’re discharged, for I know that
your motives were pure—
You desired to protest against Prus-
sian Kultur ! ”

GRAND CHORUS

So fill up the cup and fill up the
can !
A tradesman’s a Hun and a copper’s
a man ;

HOMŒOPATHY

But O that each restaurateur were
a brewer,
For a healthy great thirst has our
British Kultur.

Bridging the Gulf; or, The Union of Classes

On Wednesday a bridge tournament was held at Sir — —'s lovely house in Park Lane in aid of Lady —'s fund for providing pure milk for the poor. The spacious rooms on the first floor were filled with people.—*The Observer*, 1915.

I

SIR ROGER TREPAN was a sensitive man, and very much moved by the war.

It made him aware of a number of things that he never had thought of before.

BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

He realized now he'd habitually left a
rich man's obligations neglected,
And he formed the conviction that
this dereliction must immedi-
ately be corrected.

"In my soul that was dead
Comes a rushing of wind.
Peccavi!" he said,
"I have sinned, I have
sinned.

It's my duty," he said, "though
these brigands
With their super-tax leave me
half broke,
Now the country is solid, to
brighten the squalid
Drab lives of less fortunate folk."

THE UNION OF CLASSES

II

Sir Roger Trepan was a resolute man,
the grass grew not under his
feet;

When he once had decided the course
he must take he never would
own himself beat.

Aflame with his high patriotic resolve
to show the morale of a bart.,
He embraced a career of deliberate
devotion to England, and so
for a start

He ordered a lackey
To telephone through
To Jimmy and Jacky
And Topsy van Boo

BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

To request them to join him at dinner

And then come and watch Tree from a box,

That the Leeds unemployed might no more be annoyed

By the heart-rending shortage of socks.

III

Henceforth—O the change, the miraculous change, from the thoughtless Sir Roger of old!—

With the strength of a saint and a statesman he ordered his most minute outlay of gold.

THE UNION OF CLASSES

He could not be persuaded to buy a
fur-coat, he would scarcely take
tea with his aunt,

Without full satisfaction that each
such transaction would benefit
some one in want.

That His Majesty's lieges
Should have a straight lead,

He ran a few gee-gees
To keep up the breed,

And shot grouse for our poor
wounded heroes

And danced for the Belgian
Red Cross,

And took personal pains that our
French friends' champagnes
Should not be produced at a loss.

BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

IV

All hail to the war for the blessings
it brings! And how could one
estimate which

Are the greater, the gains that accrue
to the poor or the benefits
reaped by the rich?.

For the poor now perceive that the
rich, whom of old they regarded
with baseless dislike,

Though they *seem* to be merely amus-
ing themselves may be helping
all classes alike.

THE UNION OF CLASSES

If they act as trustees
For the money they spend
The tangoest teas
May bring fruit in the end,
And game-preserves, cars, and
casinos,
Rightly handled, are sound as
a bell,
And polo at Ranelagh may be
not merely manly
But socially useful as well.

V

And the rich. . . . Oh what pros-
pects of service! What vistas
of generous deeds!

BRIDGING THE GULF; OR,

They will never neglect, now they've
found out a way, their poor
fellow-citizens' needs.

They'll rejoice now they feel that
they need never more of the
ancient class-feeling be frightened,

That they've learnt during war to
distinguish 'twixt pleasures
which are, and which are not,
enlightened.

They have opened their eyes,
Though at very long last,
To their blind and unwise
Lack of heart in the past,
And at last seen the sense of
the Gospel

THE UNION OF CLASSES

That they should not be selfish,

like hogs,

That the Children may eat till

they're round and replete,

But they *must* leave some

crumbs for the dogs.

The Touch of Nature

"We want a Government which will stick at nothing which will win the war."—*Daily Mail.*

A T nothing, Harmsworth? No-
thing?

Once again
One wants to plead, though one must
plead in vain,
That you would condescend to clearer
terms.

"Nothing" might mean, e.g., the use
of germs.

THE TOUCH OF NATURE

But that, no doubt, was not before
your eyes,

For germs fly both ways, and one
may surmise

You'd rather not, even if all else
fail,

Wipe out *en masse* the readers of
the *Mail*—

That special vileness would be in-
convenient.

What you mean is that we have
been too lenient

To neutrals who, with calculated
force,

We might compel to steer a friendlier
course,

To silly races, living at a distance,

THE TOUCH OF NATURE

Whom we might sell, thus purchasing assistance,
That we have been too fond of paper fights,
Much, much too fond of other people's "rights"
And idiotic laws by land and sea
That should not count against necessity.
But pause, proud lord, and think . . . did we resort
To any measure of whatever sort,
To bullying, lying, wanton butchery,
To every kind of paying atrocity,
Might not seditious men, who have no sense,

THE TOUCH OF NATURE

Urge that the two contending Governments
Should cease to chant unmeaning
Hymns of Hate,
Lay down their arms, and just amalgamate?

The Higher Life for Clergymen

"Conscription is a step towards the Higher Life."—*A Living Dean.*

"... he who made the earthquake and the storm,
Perchance made battles too."

A Dead Archbishop.

CHRIST, when you hung upon
that tree accurst,
Bleeding, and bruised, and agonized
by thirst,
Mocked, tantalized, and spat on and
defiled,

THE HIGHER LIFE

On a near rising ground there stood
and smiled,
Serene behind those ravening Hebrew
beasts,
Annas and Caiaphas, the two high
priests.

They felt uplifted, doubtless ; for their
god

Was Moloch who was always pleased
with blood.

Under all names this one red God
they love,

And when the evidence appeared to
prove

THE HIGHER LIFE

The divine origin of Him who died,
They thought 'twas Moloch they had
crucified !

Nor will they change; when the last
worst war is done,
And all mankind lies rotting in the
sun,
High on the highest pile of skulls
will kneel,
Thanking his god for that he did
reveal
This crowning proof of his great
grace to man,
A radiant, pink, well - nourished
Anglican.

EPIGRAMS

I

The Dilemma

God heard the embattled nations
sing and shout
“Gott strafe England!” and “God
save the King!”

God this, God that, and God the
other thing—

“Good God!” said God, “I’ve got
my work cut out.”

II

Lord Molasses

Lines written on reading that Lord Devonport had urged in the House of Lords that, in the interests of national economy, a considerable reduction should be made in the amount spent on Army pay and allowances.

IS it not strange that Lord
Molasses

Should dare to preach to soldiers'
wives,

And seek to rob the working-classes
Of both their money and their
lives?

LORD MOLASSES

Oh no! A peer of new creation
Broad-based on wholesale groceries
Will still preserve an inclination
For paring other people's cheese.

III

The Entente

"Turkey is our natural ally."—*General Bernhardi.*

"HOCH die Kultur ! High
Heaven speed the work!"

So cries the aspiring Teuton to the
Turk.

Creation echoes with the glad re-
frain,

Deep calls to deep, Armenia to
Louvain.

On Base Metals

(After Glasgow)

IF we were asked to make a choice

'Twixt two inflictions, both unpleasant—

The ruinous sword, the raucous voice—

We almost feel as if, at present,

We should prefer the Iron Hand
Of Prussian, Saxon, or Bavarian,

Rather than any longer stand

The Brazen Tongue of this vul-
garian.

V

The Trinity

Cry "God for Harry! England and Saint George!"—*Henry V.*

CUSTOMS die hard in this our native land;
And still in Northern France, I understand,
Our gallant boys, as through the fray they forge,
Cry "God for Harmsworth! England and Lloyd George!"

VI

Inexperto Crede

Written on reading in Harmsworth's *Evening News* a vigorous denial of the truth of the statement that Honesty is the Best Policy.

YOU may be accurate when you
say
That habitual honesty does not pay;
But there's still one point which
leaves room for doubt,
Which is: How the devil did *you*
find out?

VII

A Tribute to the Memory of Richard Porson

MEN of sound English stock
Conscription must shock,
Men of every description
Detest this conscription,
Not one in five score,
But ninety-five more,
Almost all except Milner,
And Milner's an Englishman.

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